

REMARKS

A. Request for Reconsideration

Applicant has carefully considered the matters raised by the Examiner in the outstanding Office Action but remains of the position that patentable subject matter is present. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the Examiner's position based on the claim amendments and following remarks.

B. Claim Status

Claims 5-11 are pending and presented for further prosecution.

Claim 5 has been amended to clarify the structures of the sink. In particular, Claim 5 recites a separation vessel underneath said basin extended continuously from said opening. Support to this amendment can be found in the discussion of part "5" on page 5. It is also shown in Figures 1-6.

Claim 9 has been amended to clarify the location of the second open/close means. Support for this amendment can be seen in the Figures 1-6.

Claims 5-9 have been further amended to simplify the language.

Claim 10 has been added to clarify the structure and arrangement of the subject matter claimed in Claim 5. Support to it can be readily seen from Figure 6.

Claim 11 has been added to recite the novel oil recovering system having a draining means in the water storage vessel at a height of a predetermined water level and an open/close means at a side of the separation vessel at the same height as the draining means. Support to this amendment can be found in the discussion at the part "6" on page 5 and in the last two paragraphs of Page 8. It is also clearly shown in Figures 1-6.

No new matter was introduced.

C. The Office Action

The following three rejections were put forward in the Office Action:

1) Claims 5, 7 and 8 had been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatented over Kelly in view of Cantrell and Lynch

2) Claim 6 had been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kelly in view of Kelly, Cantrell and Lynch, further in view of Maranville.

3) Claim 9 had been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kelly in view of Kelly, Cantrell and Lynch, further in view of Broughton and Hirshstein.

The Examiner acknowledged that Kelly does not teach a basin having an opening in the bottom wall and a separation vessel being underneath the basin. The Examiner, however, cited Cantrell to teach such a basin and the separate vessel underneath.

Applicant has amended Claim 5 to clarify that the separation vessel is extended directly from said opening underneath the basin. Shown in Figure 6, the separation vessel is formed underneath the basin's opening commensurate with the opening's perimeter by downwardly extending the sidewalls and the bottom wall of the basin. Neither Kelly, Cantrell or Lynch teaches such a feature.

The separation vessel extended directly from said opening provides substantial advantages. In this way, the front and back sidewalls of the separate vessel is the direct extension of the bottom wall of the basin and the two side sidewalls can be formed by the same pieces of metal that is used for the two sidewalls of the basin. Therefore, the structure claimed facilitate a very cost-effective way of manufacturing the device, where the basin and the separation vessel can be made together using the same sheets of metal, without cutting and welding pieces together.

Claims 7 and 8 depend on Claim 5 and are deemed patentable over Kelly, Cantrell and Lynch for the same reasons as Claim 5.

Claims 6 and 9 depends on Claim 5. As demonstrated above, Kelly, Cantrell and Lynch do not teach or suggest the separation vessel being extended directly from said opening underneath the basin, as in Claim 5. Maranville, Broughton and Hirshstein do not teach or suggestion these features either.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted the combination of Kelly, Cantrell, Lynch and Maranville, Broughton or Hirshstein does not render the subject matter in the Claim 5 and its dependent Claims 6 - 9 obvious.

D. The new claim 10

Claim 10 has been added to clarify the structural arrangement of the subject matter claimed in Claim 5. Support to this new claim can be seen in Figure 6.

Claim 10 explicitly recites that the basin has two side walls, a front wall and a back wall; and the front wall and the back wall are bent toward each other and then bent vertically downward so that the bent front wall and the back wall form a bottom wall of the basin with an oblong horizontal opening in the bottom wall. The separation vessel is provided underneath the basin, which has two side walls formed by same piece of material as the two side walls of the basin and a front wall and a back wall formed by the same piece of material as the front wall and back wall of the basin, bent vertically downward at the opening in the bottom wall of the basin.

Claim 10 thus makes it clear that the front and back sidewalls of the separate vessel are the continuous extension of the bottom wall of the basin and the two side sidewalls of the separation vessel are the continuous extension of the two sidewalls of the basin using the same pieces of metal. No cited reference teach such a basin formed with a separation vessel in an integrate structure.

E. The new claim 11

Claim 11 has been added to recite the novel oil recovering system in the present invention. It includes a draining means in the water storage vessel at a height of a predetermined water level and an open/close means on a side of the separation vessel at the same height with the draining means.

One of the novel features of the present invention is that it facilitates a total recovery of the separated oil. As shown in Figures 1-6, the device of the present invention provides a draining means, in the separation vessel, at the height of the predetermined water level and places the open/close means at the same height as the draining means.

The advantage of this arrangement is discussed at page 8 of the application. It takes account of the weight balance between the water and oil in the separation vessel and the water in the storage vessel. By opening the open/close means, the separated oil is removed and water level of the separation vessel moves up pushing all the remaining oil up toward the open/close means. The separated oil can thus be totally removed due to the automatic moving up of the water in the separation vessel.

None of the cited references teach or suggest such a total removal arrangement where the draining means and the open/close means are positioned at the same height with the predetermined water level. All of the cited references feature an open/close means for oil removal much higher than the draining means. Thus, in the prior art, there is always an amount of oil can not be removed by simply open the open/close means.

Applicants respectfully submit that the cited references do not teach or suggest the features recited in Claims 10 and 11. Therefore Claims 10 and 11 are patentable over the cited references standing alone or in combination.

F. Conclusion

It is respectfully submitted that application is in condition for allowance, and such action is hereby requested. Should any fees or extensions of time be necessary in order to maintain this Application in pending condition, appropriate requests are hereby made and authorization is given to debit account # 02-2275.

Respectfully submitted,

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